

JFK's last day lives on in Dallas

By Hugh Aynesworth
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DALLAS — They come from all over — toting cameras and notebooks, lugging books and tabloid newspapers, or carrying the latest digital equipment and semiprofessional lighting.

Some obviously have camped out. Many have interviewed at least 50 people who know nothing specific about the case. But everyone eventually lines up to have his or her picture taken with that window in the background.

One by one or in small groups, they make the annual November trek — the slow, deliberate sweep around Dealey Plaza, eyes checking out each building, moving to the "grassy knoll," their arms eventually pointing toward the window where most believe Lee Harvey Oswald fired the loudest shots heard in our lifetimes.

It's been 33 years today.

Many of today's onlookers seem drawn by doubts about the official version of what happened or by a relentless urge to capitalize on the tragedy.

"Oswald Didn't Fire a Shot," shouts out one tabloid hawked in front of the Texas School Book Depository. For \$3 you too can read about this exclusive, which claims the FBI, CIA and Dallas police covered up the real story.

One thin, grim man too young to have been born when President



A limousine remodeled to look like John F. Kennedy's takes tourists along the route he took Nov. 22, 1963, in Dallas.

Kennedy was killed sells CDs featuring the true assassin, a character named Bob Debussie, who tells how he was hired by a Russian agent to hire Oswald but was so disappointed in Oswald's demeanor and rifle skills that he handled the job himself.

Another hawk, this one a long-time conspiracy theorist who for years has been engaged in selling JFK-related materials, offers a videotape of Illinois prison inmate Jim Files explaining how he fired the fatal shots that Nov. 22. That video goes along with a self-published book about how the JFK assassination is linked to the bombing in Oklahoma City.

Not too many are selling: The video-book package costs \$27.

At least six other authors es-

pousing six different conspiracy theories — including a couple who have backed more than one horse in the race — peddle their tomes.

Sons and daughters of some who were eyewitnesses here 33 years ago offer to sell "exclusive" photos. Two who reek of alcohol and likely were not present when the tragedy occurred peddle autographs while claiming they were among the few hundred on hand that day.

Looking at a woman claiming she has been here every Nov. 22 since 1963, Doris Comstock of St. Louis said: "If she was here in 1963, she must've been in diapers."

"This place really does have that certain aura," the vacationing Missouri woman added. "It's as though little voices are calling out to you

as you walk around the plaza."

Some facetiously suggest that those voices might be emanating from nearby hotels, where two different conspiracy conventions are set up to debate and promote yet another handful of theories about what really happened.

For \$100 a participant can hear several self-styled experts tell how Kennedy's body was switched between Dallas and Washington, how Oswald didn't shoot a gun that day, and what a hero filmmaker Oliver Stone is for fighting "government lies."

And down the street one can hear an in-depth discussion of the Zapruder film, the 8mm movie footage that best chronicled the assassination, or pick from several other would-be assassins, living and dead.

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